

# Secrets of the Presidents

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**Information from**

[http://web.archive.org/web/20121103121035/http://pbskids.org/wayback/prez/secrets/president\\_01.html](http://web.archive.org/web/20121103121035/http://pbskids.org/wayback/prez/secrets/president_01.html)



# **1. George Washington**

My mouth was full of dentures -- so I had a thing about dental care. I made sure every one of my six horses had their teeth brushed daily.

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## 2. John Adams

I taught myself to speak Dutch. Then I hopped in a boat to the Netherlands, where I borrowed money to keep America from going broke.

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### 3. Thomas Jefferson

Admirers once sent me a 1,235-pound block of cheese, with a note that read:

*"The greatest cheese in America for the greatest man in America."*

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## 4. James Madison

Not one, but *two* vice presidents died in office while I was president. Was it something I said?

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## **5. James Monroe**

I was shot in the shoulder during the Revolutionary War. And they never took the bullet out!

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## **6. John Quincy Adams**

You think the books you read for school are long? I read the Bible cover to cover every year!

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## **7. Andrew Jackson**

My pet parrot, Poll, could whistle and even talk, but sometimes the bird wasn't exactly polite. Ol' Poll had to be taken away from my funeral service because she was cussin' up a storm! Maybe she just missed me?

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## **8. Martin Van Buren**

I'm from Old Kinderhook, New York. I called my hometown "O.K." for short... and later, "O.K." started to mean "all right."

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## 9. William Henry Harrison

When I was elected, I was so excited that I sat down and wrote the best inauguration speech ever! ...Well, it was the longest one, anyway. I spoke for two whole hours on inauguration day. I was proud of myself for saying all those things I wanted to say. Too bad it was really cold and windy that day. I caught a cold that turned into deadly pneumonia, and I was laid to rest only a month after becoming president. So I was the president who talked the longest and served the shortest. Guess I should have known when to call it quits!

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## 10. John Tyler

Five years after I left the White House, I was so poor that I couldn't even pay a bill of \$1.25 until after I harvested my corn. And I thought presidents were supposed to be rich!

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## **11. James K. Polk**

You have to be tough if you want to be president. At age 17 I had a gallstone surgically removed without any anesthesia or antiseptics.

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## **12. Zachary Taylor**

I never voted in a presidential election -- but people sure voted for me.

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## **13. Millard Fillmore**

When my wife and I moved into the White House, we felt that something was missing. So we had the first bathtub installed there. Those twelve guys before me sure must have been dirty.

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## **14. Franklin Pierce**

I was the first president to memorize and recite my inaugural address from memory. (And you thought memorizing times tables was hard!)

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## **15. James Buchanan**

I had a funny habit of always closing one eye. It wasn't always the same one, either. I was farsighted in one eye and nearsighted in the other.

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## **16. Abraham Lincoln**

I used to spy on my neighbors as a credit reporting correspondent. My job was to tell businesses who could be trusted with loans.

Index



## **17. Andrew Johnson**

Who says you have to have to go to school in order to be president? I never attended a single day of classes.

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## **18. Ulysses S. Grant**

I once got a speeding ticket and a \$20 fine for riding my horse too fast. Even presidents have to watch the speed limit!

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## **19. Rutherford B. Hayes**

I won a lot of my elementary school spelling bees. When you have a name like Rutherford you have to know how to spell.

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## **20. James A. Garfield**

My assassin shot me in the back. The doctors tried to remove the bullet but they could never find it. I died eighty days after I was shot.

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## **21. Chester A. Arthur**

There was nothing I loved more than fishing for salmon.

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## **22 and 24. Grover Cleveland**

Yes, I was president two separate times -- #22 and #24! Doctors gave me a rubber jawbone when they removed cancer in part of my jaw. My jawbone surgery was a secret. Doctors operated on me on a private yacht traveling between New York and Massachusetts.

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## **23. Benjamin Harrison**

People said I was often in a bad mood when I was president, so they called me "the human iceberg!"

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## 25. William McKinley

I volunteered for the Union Army during the Civil War. Since I was just a teenager, one of my first assignments was to bring troops coffee and hot meals out on the front lines. Nobody on either side called time out -- I could have been shot! I was decorated for bravery and eventually promoted to major by the end of the war.

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## **26. Theodore Roosevelt**

Everybody knows I loved to go hunting, but I loved my dogs even more. One time my dogs were attacked by four mountain lions. I killed all the mountain lions with nothing but a knife.

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## 27. William Howard Taft

Some people might describe me as...  
"pleasantly plump." I guess it's true. When I  
was elected president, I weighed 332 pounds  
-- that's more than a baby elephant!

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## 28. Woodrow Wilson

I shocked the nation's capital by dating Edith Galt much too soon after my first wife passed away. And I was head over heels -- I proposed just three months after I met Edith! When she rejected me, saying it was too soon, I tried again. She became my second wife 16 months after my first wife died.

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## **29. Warren G. Harding**

I was the first president to ride in style -- that is, in an automobile -- on election day.

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## **30. Calvin Coolidge**

Sure, plenty of presidents had pets, but their animals were not as loveable as my wife's sweet Rebecca... her pet raccoon!

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## **31. Herbert Hoover**

I am the only president who didn't want any towns named after me. That's because people who lost their homes during the Depression lived in shanty towns they called "Hoovervilles" -- after me, their president.

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## **32. Franklin D. Roosevelt**

My mother, Sara, really must have loved her dogs. When she went on vacation, she would mail them postcards.

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## **33. Harry S. Truman**

I wasn't much of a jock while growing up. More of a bookworm. By the time I graduated from high school, I had read all 2,000 books in my public library -- including the encyclopedias!

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## **34. Dwight D. Eisenhower**

My dog was banned from the White House because it did you-know-what on the floor of the diplomatic reception room!"

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## **35. John F. Kennedy**

Some people go swimming to cool down. I took dips in the White House pool to warm up. I kept the pool at 90 degrees Fahrenheit!

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## **36. Lyndon B. Johnson**

When I visited the Taj Mahal as vice president, I let out a holler so I could listen to my voice echo. Now wouldn't you have done the same... same... same?

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## **37. Richard M. Nixon**

My mom and I had different plans for my future, and neither of us thought I should be president. She wanted me to be a Quaker missionary, and I wanted to become an FBI agent -- but the Bureau didn't accept my application.

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## **38. Gerald R. Ford**

September 1975 may have been the worst month of my life. Two different women tried to shoot me. Fortunately, I was not hurt -- and they were put behind bars!

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## **39. Jimmy Carter**

When I became president, I had to make some serious changes in my lifestyle... and my hair style. I started parting my hair on the left instead of on the right.

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## **40. Ronald Reagan**

Some people called me "Rawhide." But don't tell anyone! It was my Secret Service code name.

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## **41. George H. W. Bush**

Nobody can say I'm afraid of danger! I flew -- and survived -- 58 combat missions in World War II.

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## **42. William J. Clinton**

I'm allergic to cat dander, but you can tell Socks, my White House cat, not to feel too bad. I'm also allergic to beef, milk, mold spores, and weed and grass pollens.

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